

Fernald Closure Project
P.O. Box 538704
Cincinnati, Ohio 45253-8704
www.fernald.gov

Fluor Fernald

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NEWS MEDIA CONTACTS:

Gary Stegner
Department of Energy
513-246-0074
gary.stegner@fernald.gov

Jeff Wagner
Fluor Fernald
513-648-4898
jeffrey.wagner@fernald.gov

**Fernald Completes Largest Waste Shipping
Campaign in DOE Complex**

CINCINNATI – Fluor Fernald and Shaw Environmental Inc. completed the largest radioactive waste shipping campaign in DOE history as the 154th train of pit waste left Fernald at 10:45 a.m. today. The shipping campaign began April 26, 1999 when the first 60-car unit train left the cleanup site for the 1,900-mile trip to Envirocare of Utah. Since then, Fernald workers have excavated nearly 1 million tons of waste generated during the uranium production era from six waste pits. To put it in perspective, if every one of the 9,100 railcars of waste were lined up end to end they would stretch over 89 miles.

“What took three decades to fill, took us just over six years to eliminate. The Waste Pits Team did a remarkable job despite all the challenges posed by waste conditions and the weather. They addressed every single obstacle and did it with a world-class safety record”, said Fluor Fernald Closure Project Director Jamie Jameson.

“The Waste Pits were a direct source of contamination into the aquifer so removing that waste was a priority. We were also concerned about using rail for shipment since Fernald hadn’t really used rail to that degree. But Fernald workers and the railroads proved they could make it work. It was reassuring knowing about every two weeks when a train left, that there was less waste on site to deal with,” said Lisa Crawford, president, Fernald Residents for Environmental Safety and Health (FRESH) and vice-chair, Fernald Citizens Advisory Board.

Work to remove the million tons of radioactive residues started two years before the first shipment left the site. Engineers had to expand and upgrade the Fernald rail infrastructure as well as rail lines and trestles in the local community. Members of the Fernald Atomic Trades and Labor Council were trained in locomotive operations, waste handling, sampling and dozens of other operations. Nearly 250 specially outfitted gondola cars with one-ton lids were either purchased or leased to support a train shipment every two weeks. Shaw Environmental designed and built a material handling facility, installed gas-fired waste dryers, a water treatment plant and air scrubbers. In all nearly 200 employees supported the project, which ran 24 hours a day, seven days a week throughout most of the project duration.

“Fernald workers, both those loading the waste and the support organizations - CSX, Union Pacific, Envirocare, Ohio and US EPA and the local community, all worked together to ensure we ran a nearly flawless operation. I applaud their commitment to excellence, “ said DOE-Fernald Director Bill Taylor.

Fluor Fernald will continue to use the existing rail infrastructure to move contaminated dirt and debris off-site that doesn't meet on-site disposal standards. Once these shipments are complete, the leased cars will be returned while a majority of the railcars will be given to other DOE cleanup sites. Buildings supporting the Waste Pits Project are now being dismantled and placed in the On-Site Disposal Facility. The 37 acres that were once home to the Waste Pits will be turned over to soil certification and restoration personnel to ensure the property meets cleanup levels and to contour the land back to a usable form complete with ponds and native grasses.

Fluor Fernald expects to complete the cleanup, soil certification and site restoration by spring 2006. The DOE's Office of Legacy Management will be responsible for the long-term care of the site once cleanup is complete.

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